

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A system for efficient distribution of inventory allotments among a plurality of tiers,  
2 comprising:  
3 an allotment database for storing maximum inventory allotments corresponding to  
4 inventory categories for each tier; and  
5 an allotment engine configured for monitoring the maximum inventory allotments  
6 for each tier and a total inventory available for each inventory category.
- 1 2. The system of claim 1 wherein the inventory is hotel rooms and the inventory  
2 categories are hotel room categories.
- 1 3. The system of claim 1 further comprising an availability database for storing the  
2 total inventory available.
- 1 4. The system of claim 1 further comprising a registration engine for verifying  
2 registered users and directing the registered user to their assigned tier.
- 1 5. The system of claim 1 wherein a total of the maximum inventory allotment for all  
2 tiers in a single inventory category is greater than the total inventory available for the  
3 single inventory category.
- 1 6. The system of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of rates wherein each of the  
2 plurality of rates corresponds to a different inventory category and tier.
- 1 7. The system of claim 1 wherein the allotment engine is further configured for  
2 allowing a reservation for a particular inventory category if a reservation request is less

3 than or equal to the maximum inventory allotment for the tier and the reservation request  
4 is less than or equal to the total inventory available.

1 8. A method for fulfilling a reservation request based on maximum inventory  
2 allotments among a plurality of tiers, comprising:  
3 assigning a maximum inventory allotment for each inventory category to each tier;  
4 comparing the reservation request for a particular inventory category from a  
5 member of a tier with the maximum inventory allotment corresponding to the particular  
6 inventory category for the tier;  
7 comparing the reservation request with a total inventory available for the particular  
8 inventory category; and  
9 allowing a reservation for the particular inventory category if the reservation  
10 request is less than or equal to the maximum inventory allotment for the tier and the  
11 reservation request is less than or equal to the total inventory available.

1 9. The method of claim 8 wherein the inventory is hotel rooms and the inventory  
2 categories are hotel room categories.

1 10. The method of claim 8 further comprising updating the total inventory available  
2 after allowing the reservation.

1 11. The method of claim 8 further comprising requiring the member to provide a  
2 member login and password in order to access the tier.

1 12. The method of claim 8 further comprising requiring the member to provide a  
2 promotion code in order to assess the tier.

1 13. The method of claim 8 wherein a total of the maximum inventory allotment for all  
2 tiers in a single inventory category is greater than the total inventory available for the  
3 single inventory category.

1 14. The method of claim 8 further comprising charging the member a rate  
2 corresponding to the member's tier for the particular inventory category.

1 15. A computer readable medium having embodied thereon a program, the program  
2 being executable by a machine to perform a method for fulfilling a reservation request  
3 based on maximum inventory allotments among a plurality of tiers, comprising:  
4 assigning a maximum inventory allotment for each inventory category to each tier;  
5 comparing the reservation request for a particular inventory category from a  
6 member of a tier with the maximum inventory allotment corresponding to the particular  
7 inventory category for the tier;  
8 comparing the reservation request with a total inventory available for the particular  
9 inventory category; and  
10 allowing a reservation for the particular inventory category if the reservation  
11 request is less than or equal to the maximum inventory allotment for the tier and the  
12 reservation request is less than or equal to the total inventory available.

1 16. A method for establishing a maximum allotment distribution system, comprising:  
2 establishing a plurality of tiers;  
3 assigning each user to one of the plurality of tiers; and  
4 assigning a maximum inventory allotment for each inventory category to each of the  
5 plurality of tiers.

1 17. The method of claim 16 wherein a total of the maximum inventory allotment for a  
2 particular inventory category is greater than a total inventory available for the particular  
3 inventory category.

- 1 18. The method of claim 16 wherein the inventory is hotel rooms and the inventory  
2 categories are hotel room categories.
- 1 19. The method of claim 16 further comprising establishing a plurality of rates wherein  
2 each of the plurality of rates corresponds to a different inventory category and tier.
- 1 20. A computer readable medium having embodied thereon a program, the program  
2 being executable by a machine to perform a method for establishing a maximum inventory  
3 distribution system, comprising:  
4 establishing a plurality of tiers;  
5 assigning each user to one of the plurality of tiers; and  
6 assigning a maximum inventory allotment for each inventory category to each of the  
7 plurality of tiers.
- 1 21. A centralized system for distribution of maximum allotments to users, comprising:  
2 a user engine configured for organizing the users into a plurality of tiers; and  
3 a management engine for maintaining a maximum inventory allotment for each  
4 inventory category for each of the plurality of tiers.
- 1 22. The system of claim 21 wherein the inventory is hotel rooms and the inventory  
2 category is a hotel room category.
- 1 23. The system of claim 21 wherein the management engine further comprises an  
2 allotment engine configured for determining if a request for inventory may be fulfilled.
- 1 24. The system of claim 21 wherein a tier of the plurality of tiers comprises at least one  
2 user.

1 25. The system of claim 21 wherein a tier of the plurality of tiers comprises a grouping  
2 of users having similar characteristics.

1 26. The system of claim 21 wherein the user engine further comprises a travel agent  
2 engine and the plurality of tiers are travel agent tiers.

1 27. The system of claim 21 wherein the user engine further comprises a corporate  
2 engine and the plurality of tiers are corporate tiers.

1 28. The system of claim 21 wherein the user engine further comprises an other segment  
2 engine and the plurality of tiers are other segment tiers.

1 29. The system of claim 21 wherein the user engine further comprises a guest engine.